

Brewster Public Library
Board of Trustees
Bylaws

Mission Statement:

Brewster Public Library, a service oriented library, which is a member of the Mid-Hudson Library System and the Putnam County Library Association, provides books and other library resources for people of all ages and the information and technology that they need to develop a life-long habit of reading and library use. The library affords the community the opportunity to participate in cultural and creative pursuits and activities. The pursuit of independent education is also emphasized by the diversity of the collection and interlibrary loan. The Brewster Public Library is dedicated to making the Town of Southeast a rewarding, attractive, and satisfying place to live and work.

The Goal/Objectives of the Brewster Public Library read as follows:

Fundamental to the Goals and Objectives devised for the Brewster Public Library are certain basic assumptions about its services and operations:

The Brewster Public Library:

Is a free public library

Provides materials on all points of view

Serves all individuals of all ages and respects their right to choose their own materials

Supports the American Library Association Bill of Rights and the principals of intellectual freedom

Is responsible to the community served

Is actively staffed by committed individuals who work together to provide quality programs and services

Emphasizes a management style that supports involved and innovative staff

Utilizes technology as appropriate for the best delivery of services.

Preamble:

The Board of Trustees of The Brewster Public Library (hereinafter "the Board"), a corporation created under a charter granted under Section 253 of the New York State Education Law by the Board of Regents (or Secretary of State) of the State of New York, dated November 21, 1930, shall be governed by the laws of New York State, the regulations of the Commissioner of Education and by the following bylaws.

Bylaws

1. NAME OF ORGANIZATION

- a. The name of the organization shall be the Brewster Public Library.

2. PURPOSE

- a. The purpose of the organization is to provide superior library service to the residents, adults and children, of the Town of Southeast.

3. FISCAL

- a. The fiscal year of the library shall be the calendar year.

4. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- a. The library shall be governed by a Board of Trustees. The Board shall consist of nine members, elected for terms of 5 years each. Newly elected members will take office at the first meeting following the annual meeting.
- b. Eligibility for office shall be limited to adults residing or owning property within the geographical limits of the Town of Southeast or the Brewster Central School District.
- c. Absence from three consecutive meetings shall constitute automatic dismissal from the Board unless the Board defers this dismissal by majority vote. The President shall inform the absent Board Member in writing that he/she is no longer on the Board. If dismissal is deferred by Board action the President shall inform the absent Board Member in writing the conditions of this deferral.
- d. There shall be no term limits for trustees.
- e. Any vacancy shall be filled by special election by the remaining members of the Board for the remainder of the term of that particular position.
- f. A trustee whose term has expired will remain in office until he/she is replaced or re-appointed.
- g. The Board may remove a Trustee for misconduct, neglect of duty, or refusal to carry into effect the library's educational purpose as provided in Education Law 226; subdivision 8.
- h. Each Trustee shall have one vote, irrespective of office held.
- i. Voting may be by ballot, electronic mail, or any reasonable means determined by the Board.
- j. All actions of the Board shall be of the Board as a unit. No Board member shall act on behalf of the Board, on any matter, without prior approval of the Board. No Board member, by virtue of his/her office, shall exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the library nor, as an individual, command the services of any library employee.
- k. Requirements for each trustee include:
 - i. Each trustee shall complete Sexual Harassment Prevention Training within 6 weeks of appointment and annually thereafter by October 31st. For more information, see the Brewster Public Library's Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy.
 - ii. Each trustee must take an oath of office with the Town of Southeast within 30 days of beginning their term of office, as per Public Officers law.

- iii. Each trustee shall complete the minimum number of hours of library trustee education as required by New York State. Cite where this is stated?
- iv. Each trustee must complete and sign the Brewster Public Library Conflict of Interest Policy for Trustees prior to their first meeting as a trustee with annual attestations of compliance with this policy.

5. OFFICERS

- a. The officers of the Board shall be the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Financial Officer. The President, Vice-President and Secretary shall be elected annually by the Board at the annual meeting. The Financial Officer shall be appointed by the Board at the annual meeting. These officers shall serve for a period of one year or until their successors shall have been duly elected. No member of the Board shall serve in any of the officer positions for more than three successive terms.
- b. The duties of such officers shall be as follows:
 - i. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Board, authorize calls for any special meetings, appoint all committees, execute all documents authorized by the Board, serve as an ex-officio voting member of all committees, and generally perform all duties associated with that office.
 - ii. The Vice President, in the absence or disability of the President, or of a vacancy in that office, shall assume and perform the duties and functions of the President. In the absence or disability of both the President and the Vice President, one of the other officers shall assume and perform the duties and functions of the President.
 - iii. The Secretary shall keep a true and accurate record of all meetings of the Board, shall issue notice of all regular and special meetings, and shall perform such other duties as are generally associated with that office. Additionally, the Secretary shall maintain a record of compliance by members of the Board with obligations of state law or Library policies.
 - iv. The Financial Officer shall oversee the financial management of the library, and will present financial reports at each Board meeting.

6. DIRECTOR

- a. The Board shall appoint a Director who shall be the executive officer of the policies of the Board and shall have charge of the administration of the library under the direction and review of the Board. The Director shall be responsible for the care of the building and equipment; for the employment and direction of the staff; for the efficiency of the library's service to the public; and for the operation of the library under the financial conditions contained in the annual budget.
- b. The Director shall render and submit to the Board reports and recommendations of such policies and procedures, which, in the opinion of the Director, will improve efficiency and quality of library service. The Director shall attend all Board meetings except for any portion of a meeting where the Board meets in executive session to consider the Director's performance or compensation or other matters that the Board determines to discuss outside the Director's presence.

7. COMMITTEES

- a. The President may appoint Board members to committees as the business of the Library may require from time to time. Such committees shall consist of one or more members of the Board, but the number of members of any committee shall not exceed four.
- b. All committees shall make a progress report to the Board at each of its meetings.
- c. Such committees will have advisory powers only unless the Board grants specific power to act.
- d. The President shall be a member of all committees.

8. MEETINGS

- a. Meetings shall be held each month, the date and hour to be set by the Board. Written notice of all meetings shall be posted on the library calendar at least five days before the meeting.
- b. Any and all meetings of the Board or any of the Board's committees may be held by any appropriate virtual means, including telephonic conference calls and virtual meeting programs (e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Office Live Meeting, etc.) Ballots and any voting requirements may be fulfilled by creating, distributing, and collecting such votes through any and all appropriate virtual/electronic and/or paper means. A vote cast by any virtual means shall hold the same standing as any paper ballot or show of hands.
- c. A special meeting of the Board may be called at any time by the President or upon the request of three members for a specific purpose. No business may be transacted at such special meeting except the stated business. Notice for such meetings shall be in accordance with the New York Open Meetings Law.
- d. The Annual Meeting shall be held in January of each year. The business transacted at this meeting shall include the election of new trustees and new officers.
- e. The operating and financial reports for the previous year shall be presented at the regular meeting in January.
- f. The preliminary budget for the subsequent calendar year shall be presented at the regular meeting in November.
- g. The final budget for the subsequent calendar year shall be presented for approval at the regular meeting in December.
- h. A simple majority of the existing Board shall constitute a quorum for the conducting of all business. If a quorum is not present at a regular meeting, the attending members may set a date for another meeting to be held within one week, and the presiding officer shall notify the absent members of this specially called meeting. Public notice will be given as practicable.

9. AMENDMENTS

- a. Amendments to these Bylaws may be proposed at any regular meeting and shall be voted upon at the next regular meeting. Written notice of the proposed amendment or amendments shall be sent to all absent members at least ten days prior to the voting session. A simple majority of the Board shall be sufficient for adoption of an amendment.
- b. Any rule or resolution of the Board, whether contained in these Bylaws or otherwise, may be suspended temporarily in connection with business at hand, but such suspension, to be valid, may be taken only at a meeting at which two-thirds of the members of the Board shall be present and two-thirds of those present shall so approve.

10. PROCEDURE

- a. All procedures not specified herein shall be in accord with Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.

Approved by the Brewster Public Library Board of Trustees

Dated: May 24, 2017

Revised: January 23, 2019

Revised July 24, 2019

Revised June 23, 2021